

# *The* AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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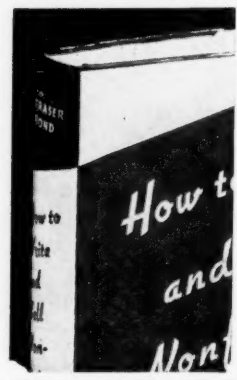
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THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

1837 Champa Street

Denver, Colo.

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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## THE ANSWER—ORGANIZATION

Last month we published a thought-provoking letter from Harmon Bellamy under the title, "Why Not an ASCAP for Writers?" Briefly, the suggestion was that a plan be developed for the relief of unquestionably underpaid writers of circulating-library books, whereby a royalty of 1 cent should be paid each time a rental book was loaned.

The contention was made that a popular circulating-library novel has a tremendous reading public, yet the author profits from it not at all. In fact, since books usually are sold at a special quantity rate to the big rental libraries, the author's returns are woefully inadequate, because of a tricky little clause which permits the publisher to pay a much reduced royalty on such sales.

The question, of course, is how such a plan as Bellamy suggests could be put into effect. There is but one possible answer—organization. From a number of letters received on the subject, we select one for publication, because it contains a concrete suggestion for action. *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST* stands ready to cooperate in any way possible to further the suggestion made by Mr. Dresser, who is himself author of a shelf-full of circulating library novels under various nom de plumes. His letter follows:

Dear Willard:

I have just had a visit with Harmon Bellamy (who stopped by on his way to the Coast) during which we thoroughly thrashed out the idea advanced by him in the July A. & J. One or two thoughts came out of the discussion which should be of interest to authors of rental books.

One of the most important is the practice of publishers of this material of printing an edition of 3000 copies of each book, selling a maximum of 2000 copies on a royalty basis, and then remaindering the rest of the edition at from 20 to 45 cents a copy to large rental operators. The author receives nothing whatever from these remaindered copies, yet they are on rental shelves all over the country, being rented regularly at a very nice profit for the libraries.

In other words, in any discussion of returns to an author, it must be remembered that there is an average of 3000 copies of each book on rental shelves instead of the 1600 or 2000 shown on royalty statements. All publishers will privately admit that remaindering is a pernicious practice, yet insist they must continue it for the small margin of profit on books which would otherwise be a loss. That's all right for the publishers, but tough on the authors.

Under Bellamy's plan of collecting a 1-cent fee on

every reading of every volume, a conservative estimate would be 30 rentals on 3000 copies—or \$900 per book.

The manner of enforcing collection is obviously the stumbling-block. Since the libraries are operated for profit, they are the ones who should reimburse the authors. Whether or not they pass on the charge to their readers is wholly immaterial. Personally, I am of the opinion there would have to be a new Federal law on the subject—or possibly a new interpretation of the present law.

That, however, should not be an insurmountable obstacle. In a democracy, anything as obviously needed and as just as this should not be difficult to put over if we can get any concerted action. I, for one, am damned tired of sitting around and bemoaning the fact that rental libraries have ruined book sales. *Let's do something about it.* ASCAP has done something about the performance of musical compositions for profit.

I do not believe there are more than 200 authors actually steadily producing rental library fiction in this country (and among these I include all the big-name mystery and light-love writers, Erle Stanley Gardner, Ellery Queen, Faith Baldwin, Kathleen Norris, *et al.*), yet this meagre handful of writers is the backbone and support of the huge rental library business, supplying reading matter every month to tens of thousands of people . . . and the majority of these 200 do not receive a living wage for their work.

Personally, I do not believe the Authors' League is the organization to deal with this. I believe a militant band of actual sufferers under the system would go much further much faster than the more unwieldy League.

On this premise, I urge any producing authors in the above category to communicate with me with any ideas they have on the subject. Bellamy is going to attempt to stir up something on the West Coast, and I hope that, between us, we may be able to start something.

Sincerely,

DAVIS DRESSER.

3251 S. Sherman St., Englewood, Colo.

□ □ □ □

## THAT SPECIAL CLAUSE

While we are on the subject of circulating library books, one of our correspondents calls attention to a peculiar aspect of the reduced royalty schedule on books sold in quantity at 50 per cent discount. He writes:

"Actually, this brings about an amazing situation wherein it is to the publisher's financial advantage to give a 50 per cent discount instead of a 46 or 48 per cent. Selling at a 46 per cent discount, the publisher receives \$1.08 for a \$2.00 book. He has to pay the author 10 per cent of the retail price, 20 cents, netting him 88 cents on that book. On the other hand, if the publisher gets big-hearted and gives the buyer a 50 per cent discount, he receives \$1.00 for a \$2.00 book. But, according to that special provision in the contract, he has to pay the author only 10 per cent of the wholesale price, or only 10 cents, and thus he nets 90 cents on that transaction. Who can blame the publisher for taking advantage of it and giving the buyer and himself a break—and the author only half of his just returns?"

□ □ □ □

## "EXCELLENT PROFESSIONAL WILL DO JOB"

The agent whose strange practices were described in our July issue was Eugene Filteau of New York City, as a number of readers guessed, because the experiences outlined coincided with their own.

Filteau's plan—as evidenced by numerous telegrams and files of correspondence sent to us—is to wire the

client whose manuscript he has undertaken to market, advising that he has a sale for the manuscript, which, however, must be converted into some other form in order to permit of closing the deal. By a fortunate chance, Filteau knows just the man to do the revision. The telegram quoted last week is typical of many. Here is a variation:

"English moving picture company will use crime confession provided same is put into proper English scenario form by professional English playwright. I know excellent playwright professional who will do job for \$50.00. Please wire same by Western Union immediately if agreeable before producer sails. Copy of scenario and contract will be sent you before production and you will receive British standard royalty. I personally advise you to comply because proposition is very good and will lead further. I personally assume full responsibility in matter.—EUGENE FILTEAU."

Another:

"Syndicate will send out approximately thousand copies of your feature provided we furnish said copies. Please wire twenty dollars immediately for costs of printing said copies because proposition is good and is an experience that will lead further.—EUGENE FILTEAU."

One reader sent us a series of telegrams:

*The first:* "Moving picture company will use (name of story) provided same is put into proper scenario form by professional playwright. I know excellent professional who will do job for fifteen dollars. Please wire same immediately because proposition is good and may lead further.—EUGENE FILTEAU."

*The second (after first \$15 had been sent):* "Same movie will use (name of another story) on same conditions. Please wire fifteen dollar revision fee today before representative leaves for Hollywood.—EUGENE FILTEAU."

*And the third:* "It happens that due to shortage of stories of your type movies will use (names of two stories) on same conditions as others. Please wire necessary fee if agreeable in order to avoid

delay. I personally advise you comply because proposition is exceptional.—EUGENE FILTEAU."

These three wires were received and the money was sent in response to them during September, 1938. In reply to inquiries, some months later, the author received a letter in which Filteau assured him, "As soon as I get something definite I will communicate with you immediately." A letter received at the time of the interchange of telegrams stated: "I assume full responsibility in the matter, that is that should the matter not be consummated to your entire satisfaction I will re-imburse you your money." Inquiries made by the author within the past few months have been ignored. The promised "re-imbursement" has failed to materialize. So also the sale to the moving picture company. In fact, no reader as yet has reported to us an instance wherein wiring Mr. Filteau the money so that "excellent professional" could "do job" bore out the promise to "lead further."

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#### VANITY PUBLISHERS AS SEEN BY BOOK-TRADE JOURNAL

*The Publishers' Weekly*, national magazine of the book publishing industry, has this to say with reference to a subject which has often been discussed in A. & J. pages:

"Every few days the *P. W.* gets a letter from some prospective author who asks whether such and such a publisher is reliable. A local librarian has suggested that the author consult us with regard to the standing of the imprint in question.

"The number of these inquiries indicates how often librarians must receive requests for such information. If we might suggest one rule for the librarian to follow, it would be to recommend to an author that he make no contract with a publisher whose imprint is not known to the purchasing department of that library. A publisher from whom the library buys nothing is unlikely to help the author achieve the contact with the public which is his natural desire in seeking publication.

"A second point: if the correspondence which the author has had with the publisher indicates that the author is expected to pay for the publication of the book, or if he is to be reimbursed for an advance out of the sale of the first 2,500 or so copies, or if he is to buy ten copies at \$2 each in consideration of a poem or two being put in an anthology, it should be made clear to him that none of these plans accomplishes anything for the author in the way of real distribution of his work.

"Publishing is not the same as printing. It is producing and distributing, and if the 'Press' which has offered its services has not established facilities for distributing its books, it is pretty safe to say that the author will save money and irritation by going no further with the proposal."

□ □ □ □

Some idea of the value of "Press Cards," distributed by certain concerns, may be gained from the fact that Federal Trade Commission announces that *Photo-Markets* (a magazine which is apparently legitimate in other respects) has signed a stipulation agreeing to cease and desist from the sale or distribution of cards or tags bearing the inscription "Press Card" or "Press Tag," purporting to grant bearers exceptional privileges through police and fire lines.

□ □ □ □

A second book postage proclamation was signed by President Roosevelt early in July, thus extending for two years the 1½ cent a pound flat postal rate on books. The lowered rate has unquestionably worked to the advantage of authors and publishers, as well as libraries and retailers and others who have to do with books.



"Were afraid to open it. George has a weak heart, and it looks like an acceptance!"



# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

August, 1939

## ESSENTIALS OF RADIO PLAYWRITING

... By WILLIAM L. KING

### INTRODUCTION



William L. King

SOME time ago, the advertising agency that handles one of the best known half-hour dramatic programs on the air was faced with an acute shortage of shows. To remedy this situation, the producers conducted a contest and offered special bonuses and prizes for good radio scripts. The

result was highly gratifying in that the number of scripts received was increased many times over, but when the piles had been weeded through and reduced to a much smaller pile of acceptable plays it was found that the number of really good ones had not increased in the slightest. Thus, the effort presented a decided loss when measured in dollars and cents, for it costs money to handle and examine a radio script. Worse yet, having played its ace card, the agency was faced with the possibility of having to take the program off the air; and anyone who understands this particular business knows that such would be the ultimate in agency calamities.

Writers can glean two pointers from this incident.

One is that there is a decided scarcity of radio plays, both in the half-hour single-shot class and in the continued classes. The tremendous

This is the first of a short series of lessons in radio writing—a field that is rapidly coming to mean more to the professional writer. The author has had an experience covering newspaper work, radio and other publicity work, and lecturing on radio writing. Several of his own plays have been produced by Chicago stations. When he appeared before his first audience as a lecturer on this subject, at the Allerton Hotel in Chicago, his introducer stated that the invitation had been extended because, "When I asked one of the gentlemen responsible for the production of one of radio's most revered programs who he would recommend as being the best authority on radio dramatics in Chicago, he gave me the name of the young man whom I introduce to you now—Mr. William Lewis King."

capacity of radio institutes a turn-over that could well be envied by the vendors of many another commodity more staple in nature. From this it can be further deduced that radio dramatics presents a writers' market that is very promising, especially to writers from other fields who might well find in radio a medium of self-expression which is more suited to their particular talents.

The second pointer to be gleaned from the above recounted incident is that, no matter how scarce the supply, it just is not possible to throw together 1500 or more words of dialogue any old way and expect the result to be gobbled up by a rapacious market. Neither is it possible to present it in just any form at all; a glance at the first page of a script will show whether or not the writer has taken elemental care in studying radio broadcasting so as really to understand what constitutes a good radio play.

So it is that, in preparing for an assault upon the attractive and interesting radio markets, a writer should take care to understand the basic technique of radio dramatic writing.

Of course, any mention of theories in connection with radio dramatics must supposedly be made in a hushed voice. An actual incident that happened in Chicago might explain this state of affairs.

A Chicago broadcasting station, in attempting to establish some form of standard by which to judge the ability of dramatic writers who applied for positions on the staff, drew up a

questionnaire for the applicants to answer. The final question was, in effect, "What features are necessary in a radio play to attract and hold the interest of the listeners?"

Unfortunately—or perhaps fortunately—the list of questions happened to fall into the hands of one of the Chicago newspapers, and the radio editor could be practically seen chortling in glee as he banged out his answering observation on his typewriter. "Even the one who drew up that list of questions," it went, "would probably not be able to answer that one."

The fortunate angle of the affair is that it should have made radio executives in general and writers in particular sit up and really start appraising their knowledge of the product they are vending. This appraisal would logically take the form of some such question as, "When a listener tunes out a radio play or intentionally tunes one in, are there basic and understandable reasons why he does so?"

Disregarding snap answers, it is to be stated emphatically that there are basically sound psychological reasons why a listener intentionally listens to, or fails to continue listening to a dramatic radio program. Let those who say that it is impossible to appeal to the "great majority" with any one program consider "Amos 'n' Andy" and "One Man's Family." Surely, these programs have not done such a bad job of finding the greatest common denominator of the radio audience. Was it accidental, or are there deep underlying reasons that lend themselves to the setting-up of a yardstick for the radio drama to be utilized alike by creator and listener?

Mistaken deductions sometimes are made from the evidence, however. One of the requirements of a radio drama which is recognized by the entire profession, which admits of having learned it particularly from the success of the first of the above mentioned duo of shows, is the requirement of *simplicity*. "Amos 'n' Andy" is simple, inasmuch as it contains one story thread; its tempo is rather slow; it involves simplicity of setting, action and plot. Ergo, in view of this success of utter simplicity, it was precipitately decided that the reason for the success of simplicity was because *the average mind of the radio listener is equal to the age level of twelve years*.

The inference so reached was wrong, for it can be demonstrated that this marked simplicity is necessitated by the *limitation of the medium* and not by the limitation of the listeners' mentality and is dictated by two considerations particularly peculiar to radio, neither of which supports the belief of a twelve-year-old average mind.

## I: CLEARNESS

Psychology says that it is impossible for any man to pay full attention to more than one idea at a time. Understand, it is said *any* man, be he infant or adult, with a mind-age of twelve years or of eighteen years. Not even a mental genius can pay *full* attention to *more than one idea or emotion at a time*. Thus, if too many factors of situation, setting, costuming, plot, action, and characterization are presented to the audience in rapid sequence, some of the values of the play are bound to be lost, often to the detriment of very important factors. If a line of dialogue should happen to contribute to more than one of the details at a time, the natural bent of the listener might easily focus his attention on one of the minor details, while the major details would slip off his conscious attention without making the slightest impression.

An actual example will best illustrate. The scene of this excerpt from a radio script is laid in the year of the First Crusade. The hosts of the Christians have halted on a dusty, hot plain some distance from the gates of Mohammedan-held Jerusalem, while two of the leaders go forward to reconnoitre.

- GODFREY: (DETERMINED) But we've just got to take Jerusalem!
- TANCRED: Only a miracle'd make it possible.
- GODFREY: Stop a moment and think, Sir Tancred—What's this hill we're standing on?
- TANCRED: One of the hermits told me it's Mount Olivet.
- GODFREY: That small church and shrine off there to our right?
- TANCRED: The Church of the Blessed Virgin.
- GODFREY: Correct on both. That garden surrounding it?
- TANCRED: The Garden of Gethsemane—But what—?
- GODFREY: (INTERRUPTING) Now you understand why we just can't retreat and leave Christ's land in the hands of infidel Mohammedans!
- TANCRED: (QUIETLY) Quite correct, your Grace—but that towering wall at the top of that slope off there about a quarter of a mile. You see it?
- GODFREY: The main wall of Jerusalem. Of course.
- TANCRED: And that lower pile of masonry between the main wall and the ravine?
- GODFREY: The outer wall, of course, but—
- TANCRED: And now look behind you—What do you see stretching far back across the plain?
- GODFREY: You mean our knights and troops?
- TANCRED: (BITTER) Troops—knights—yes! A mere thirty thousand where two hundred and fifty thousand started out! Thirty thousand starving, thirsty troops seared by this torturing heat!
- GODFREY: Your men're as bad off as mine!
- TANCRED: It isn't that, your Grace—A moment ago you pointed out why we can't morally retreat—
- GODFREY: Well?
- TANCRED: I'm only pointing out why we can't physically go forward!

The clarity of all factors—of forward motion of the plot, of characterization, of setting, of emotion, and thoughts connected with this scene—is readily apparent to the reader and would be equally so to the listener. It is obtained by keeping the text simple and developing it rather slowly, by keeping the thoughts segregated into groups, by short lines, by not trying to make one line accomplish too much, and finally, by giving the emotions of the audience a chance really to register.

The same ideas could have been conveyed to an audience in the following manner:

GODFREY: (DETERMINED) But we've just got to take Jerusalem!

TANCRED: Only a miracle'd make it possible.

GODFREY: Stop a moment and think, Sir Tancred—What's this hill we're standing on—that small church and shrine off there to our right—that garden surrounding it?

TANCRED: We're standing on Mount Olivet—that Church is the Church of the Blessed Virgin and that's the Garden of Gethsemane—But what—?

GODFREY: (INTERRUPTING) Now you understand why we just can't retreat and leave Christ's land in the hands of the infidel Mohammedans! (Etc.)

Those lines contain factors of motion, emotion, circumstance, setting, plot, and characterization, all thrown at the listener in a few seconds. True, some minds might be able to register all of them, but no mind can *fully digest* more than one idea at a time, be it the mind of a genius or of an adolescent. Time must be allowed for each idea to "sink in," and for each emotional value to be savored. Otherwise, if a listener finds himself turning over the facts of setting in his mind, he is likely to miss a fact of characterization or motion. The result of rapidly piling thoughts and emotions upon one another is that by the time the play has ended there is a welter of confused, half digested ideas in the listener's mind, instead of a single, clear-cut impression.

## II: SIMPLICITY

The second factor contributing to a need for simplicity is likewise based on psychological knowledge and proof, and it is particularly weighty in radio because of the restricted use of the audience's sensory faculties. The two contrasting examples used in connection with the factor of clearness readily illustrate the second limitation of radio—limited retentiveness.

In the theatre, details of setting are always on the stage before the audience's eyes. So are details of costuming and motion. Even characterization is visually aided by costuming and physiognomy. With these factors established practically instantaneously and maintained by means of sight, the dialogue of the stage has to



"There, that proves my dad's a great writer, doesn't it?"

concern itself solely with characterization and forward motion of the plot. Radio plays, on the contrary, have to establish *and* maintain by one sensory channel (the ear) all details that are ordinarily supplied in the theatre by two channels (sight and hearing).

The result of these conditions is that if the plot of a radio play is complicated, or difficult to disclose, the limited retentive power of the listener either blurs the details into one another, and the entire play becomes turbid, or the major factors have to be reiterated, thus robbing the play of its verve. A simple plot, on the other hand, naturally allows the entire play to be much more readily understood. If abetted by familiar or simple characterization, setting, and dramatic action, so much the better. Hours after the close, a listener can look back, clearly recall the entire play, and enjoy it in the way that humanity most enjoys its experiences—in retrospect.

Before closing the subject of listener perception, it is as well to point out that there is one more faculty for reception of information about a play which the stage possesses, but which radio does not. This is the factor of *foreknowledge*. As a result of newspaper publicity and word-of-mouth advertising, it is practically impossible for a theatre-goer to see a play without some advance knowledge of its plot, setting, or characters. In radio, this is practically absent.

So, there are the two limiting factors that ordain the necessity for simplicity and clearness in a radio drama—perception and retention. Upon analysis, it is seen that this necessity does not mean that the average mind-age of the listening public is only twelve years. By forgetting this "twelve-year-old" postulate, radio dramatic writers—and producers—should be able to step confidently forward in the search for new ideas and their treatment—a dearth of which is the plague of radio at this moment.

# SUSPENSE—PARLAYED

. . . By BELTON O. BUCK

The author has written for pulp magazines in a great many fields, and is probably best known for mystery-action yarns with a radio background. He has also written a number of successful radio mystery dramas.



Belton O. Buck

**W**RITE stories, once in a while, mostly about the radio announcer who got bumped off and whose voice, some two days later, came through a microphone to un-kink the case. Or the Guato *zagayeyro* with two half-dead whites on his hands. You know—he can tote only one of them out of the jungle, so he has to squat on his heels and wait for somebody to die.

Were I depending solely upon my income from fiction, I might conceivably have to tighten my belt, especially around dinner

time. But a lot of those stories do find good berths. Yes, I guess I've sold off and on to most of the self-respecting (and other) pulps.

I also put a couple of bucks on a horse, once in a while. Now wait a minute, pal, there *is* a connection.

Know what a parlay is? Sure, all you win on the first horse pyramids onto the second. Then all of that goes on the third. After that you sit down and figure up what you would have won if the parlay hadn't busted.

Well, the way I figure the odds, the chap at the typewriter has to give his reader a run for his money, just the same as he'd get at Arlington or in Moe Kehoe's back room.

Okay, we're off!

Our reader—let's call him Parlay Cholly—looks over the lineup and spots a story about a guy that's really worth rooting for. Parlay Cholly is hooked for a bet—see how insidious it is?

The hero in the story gets into a jam. Here's Parlay Cholly who can't do a thing about it—except read and root, which he does.

Now suppose the guy in the story kicks the villain on the shins, then uppercuts him among the teeth on the way down—well, that's the end of the story. Parlay Cholly gets sore about it—he has picked another loser. Nuts!

But this guy in the story is smart. He figures

a slick way to put one over on the menace. Parlay Cholly nods his head approvingly—that's exactly what *he* would do in the same situation. But the villain is smart, too. The hero promptly gets a whack on the whiskers and goes down again for the count. Parlay Cholly is startled. Say, this story may turn out to be a winner, after all.

See? It's like Parlay Cholly being paid off for his first winner. And he lets it all ride, then and there.

Will the chap at the typewriter bust up the parlay?

Let's take a story I happen to remember because it was built on a chassis of parlayed suspense. The fact that my wife thought up the plot for me and that it was written and published many months ago makes no difference.

A surgeon is kidnaped and brought blindfolded to gang headquarters. He is asked to perform a delicate operation—bluntly, to amputate the memory of a chap who knows too much. Preposterous? Oh sure, but Parlay Cholly took it in stride. Doc's daughter is produced by the gangsters; sort of a hostage, you understand, which makes the spot pretty tight. It is necessary to use a perk-up hypodermic and there is a lot of monkey business at that point. But Cholly knows what it's all about. Doc, of course, is forced to plunge that needle into his own daughter's arm. It turns out to be a sleeping potion. So—well, what next?

Let's settle back with Cholly again as he hopes to multiply his winnings—in this case, his enjoyment of the story.

Here's Doc muttering about calling the drug store for something he'll need, and snapping a number into the telephone. Here's the arch gangster snatching the phone and discovering he is connected with Sergeant So-and-So of the Police Department. Just an exciting incident in the race—maybe a bit of crowding, down the backstretch.

Doc seems resigned to it all. But he doesn't fool Parlay Cholly. Nope, this doc is a cagey bird. Here he is, writing something on his prescription pad, in Latin or Sanskrit or something. A lieutenant gangster is to take it to the drug store. Cholly, mentally, is turning into the stretch right now; he doesn't trust the writing on that note.

Well, we *could* wind up that story now. If that fake prescription brings a wagonload of



cops, we're close to the tag line. In that case Parlay Cholly will merely shrug. He has won a little—not much, though, for a guy who likes to shoot the works.

Wait a minute. Here is a clumping on the stairs. Lieutenant Gangster is returning. Announces that he delivered the prescription, ducked out a minute, then peeped in and saw the excited druggist giving the phone dial hell. And just in case there might be some question about it, he clipped said druggist over the head and brung him along. Thump—here he is, a bit the worse for wear.

That parlay is automatic now. Cholly's winnings on the first two bangtails are riding on a third. Whole hog or none, that's Cholly. And if *this* is a winner, from here on in, the payoff will be a hatfull!

There's a breathing spell now, with the hero doused with buckets of gloom. Then things happen fast. The room is suddenly full of cops. The arch gangster's face is suddenly full of an electric fan that is buzzing in our hero's hand.

Great stuff, the cavalry coming over the hill like this, but Cholly wants to know what the hell. This part of it is mechanical, of course, and comes with about the twelfth cigarette. In this case it happened to be an S.O.S. badly and reversely printed in carbon on doc's handkerchief. Cholly will be damned! He *saw* doc tracing patterns with his fingernail on that handkerchief. He saw doc mopping his forehead, too. What's more, he saw the wind from that electric fan blow the handkerchief out of the window. But he plumb overlooked the little slip of carbon paper from the prescription pad!

And isn't that paragraph about the simple little game of drop the handkerchief just too elegant?

There it is—Cholly's three-horse win parlay. Triple enjoyment from triple suspense, the way incidents are stacked on top of each other. Hero in jam. First idea goes blooie. Second idea still-born. Third or fourth idea disconcertingly sweet.

Pay-off!

## THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA

... By LYNN CLARK

Lynn Clark is Professor of short-story writing at the University of Southern California. He has contributed several articles to *The Author & Journalist*.



Lynn Clark

ONE of the old boys (it *must* have been Aristotle, 38 something to 32 something B. C., and that makes him about 2200 years old) issued the proclamation that a work of art should have (a) a beginning, (b) a middle, and (c) an ending. This is surely a simple bit of philosophy that a child may read.

Applied to short-stories, it is no less than a formula, and it is two to one that the beginning and the ending are most important.

Let's begin at the end, Omega. Too many stories nowadays, especially in "upper brackets" of literature, do not end; they just stop.

In spite of all of my protestations and Fourth of July oratory, my students "let the old cat die." When I was a kid and we used to gather at the swing, "letting the old cat die" was supposed to be fatal. In writing short-stories, it *is* fatal. Last impressions are most lasting, and nothing is quite so disappointing to a reader as that bewildered feeling.

Again referring to my childhood—I had a cousin. When I told him a story, after much forethought and preparation, brought the thing to what I thought was a great climax, and waited for him to laugh, he invariably looked at me coldly and asked, "Then what happened?"

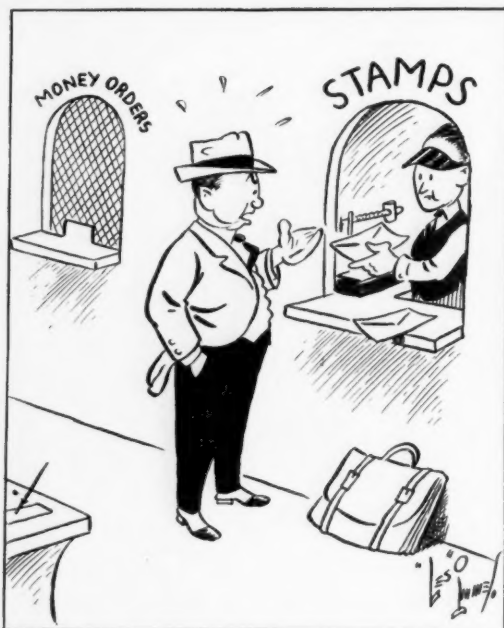
After all, a day in the life of an old lady, or, what Adelbert did on Tuesday, does not necessarily make a short-story. There must be a plot, a problem solved, a "point" made.

Way back in December, 1932, Sewell Peaslee Wright (than which there is no *whicher*, for me) contributed an article to this journal on *endings*. I have been using that article in my classes ever since, always giving credit where credit was due. (Look up your old copies. I have mine since 1916.)

The ending of a story should do these things:

1. Leave no unsolved problems. Nothing is so disappointing to the reader as to have his curiosity aroused, and then not satisfied.
2. Leave the reader completely satisfied, not necessarily happy, but feeling that, for *this* particular dramatic episode, nothing else can be said.
3. Give a "point" to the story so that the reader will not say, "Well, what of it?" or "So what?" If there is no "point," then you shouldn't have written the story, or,—if you did, you should have filed it carefully in your waste-basket.

And now for the beginning, the Alpha. If you have a story to tell, then why don't you *tell* it? Do not, as sports broadcasters so fre-



"Why do I have to send that manuscript 'First-Class'? Five editors have already rejected it?"

## ARE YOU MEANT TO BE A WRITER?

By PROF. QUIZZUM

This list of questions—the answers more particularly—occasioned so much controversy in the A. & J. office, when the article was submitted by a member of the staff, that it was decided to publish them "as is" and get the reaction of readers. For the answers which at least one member of the staff (the one who wrote them) agrees are correct, see page 13.

**H**AVE you ever really analyzed your equipment for a career in professional writing? These questions may help you to check up on it, if you'll answer them conscientiously.

They're not meant for the literary genius, nor for the writer who is satisfied to file away his manuscripts with his souvenirs. They're for the average, run-of-the-mill writer who wants to get his work into print.

It may be that you'll disagree with some of the "right" answers, but they're the answers that would be given by a majority of writers who manage to coax checks from the editors.

1. The profession of writing appeals to me because—
  - a. It is a pleasant, glamorous occupation.....☐
  - b. I need to make some money.....☐
  - c. It offers opportunities for the capable, hard worker.....☐
  - d. I yearn for self expression.....☒
  - e. The writer is his own boss.....☐

quently do, tell all about the scenery and the bee-utiful weather before the game starts. Open in a scene, where someone is *saying* or *doing* something.

Leave the description for later passages. It is necessary, of course, but the reader wants to see action, physical or mental, at once. Put him into a definite scene of action and keep him there throughout the story. Create an illusion of reality at the outset, and maintain it. Never let the reader get out of a *scene*. Remember, he is identifying himself (or herself) as one of the characters, the hero, or the heroine. He wants to feel that he (or she) is *there*.

When you open your story by *explaining*, or by *describing*, the reader does not get into the scene. He may admire your descriptive language, but he is, if he keeps on reading, waiting for something to happen.

### Rules for openings:

1. Let somebody *say* something. Not a comment on the weather, "that introductory topic responsible for the world's unhappiness" as O. Henry once wrote, but something pertinent, something significant to the problem involved in your plot.
2. Let somebody *do* something important. Start with *action*, mental or physical.

2. I consider myself equipped for a literary career because—
  - a. My friends praise my literary talents.....☐
  - b. I know my work is just as good as a lot of stuff that gets printed.....☐
  - c. My mental qualities and determination seem to fit me for it.....☐
  - d. I get a lot of fun out of writing.....☐
3. The ability to write salable manuscripts is—
  - a. A profession to be studied and learned.....☐
  - b. A talent that must be born into the writer.....☐
4. For his reading, the writer should choose—
  - a. Classical literature .....☐
  - b. The best current literature.....☐
  - c. What interests him most.....☐
  - d. The kind of stories and articles he is trying to write.....☐
5. The average writer's best work is generally struck off on the spur of the moment, when an idea hits him.....True ☐ False ☐
6. A writer does well to keep in mind that many current magazine stories are pretty trashy.....True ☐ False ☐
7. The best literary criticisms are sometimes harsh and discouraging.....True ☐ False ☐
8. A temperamental attitude is an asset to the writer.....True ☐ False ☐
9. Everybody can learn to write.....True ☐ False ☐
10. Wide experience is necessary to success in writing.....True ☐ False ☐

# PLAY WRITING FOR THE AMATEUR MARKET

. . . By JOHN G. FULLER

Mr. Fuller is a play reader for one of the leading companies publishing plays for amateur production.

IF one script out of every ten landing on a play publisher's desk shows any indication of the author knowing what the score is, it's unusual. I am referring not to professional plays slanted for Broadway production—Lord knows the producers are probably swamped with more junk than the publishers—but to plays submitted for publication in the amateur market. Scripts come in by the droves—three-act, one-act and sketches, and very rarely do we find one which conforms with the rather exacting requisites of the amateur market.

First of all, let's try to define this somewhat vague and nebulous "amateur market." For all practical purposes, a market for a play publisher exists whenever two or more people want to get together to put on some kind of entertainment. Usually, this means that Sadie Switch and Molly Mutch want to put on some kind of skit for the Sunshine Guild's final meeting. On the other hand, there is probably one active, stable dramatic group putting on fairly ambitious plays for every one thousand people. And they may possibly average two to four plays per year. With our population hovering around 120 million, that would show a potential turnover of nearly one million amateur plays a year, plus the countless short entertainments and skits. These are just rough figures, and are not to be taken too seriously. But it does give you perhaps a better conception of the size of the amateur market, the large part of which must be fed by play publishers such as French, Baker, Denison, Dramatic, Fitzgerald and others. If you had happened to glance through *Life* magazine several months ago, you would have noticed that a play called "Aaron Slick From Punkin Crick" had been produced by amateurs over 25,000 times—completely overshadowing the longest run professional play, "Abie's Irish Rose," which dragged along with a measly 2500 record. In other words, people are going to continue buying play books from the publishers, and the publishers have got to feed them what they want, without paying too much attention to raising the cultural level of the amateur Thespian's taste. Frankly, it is not very high.

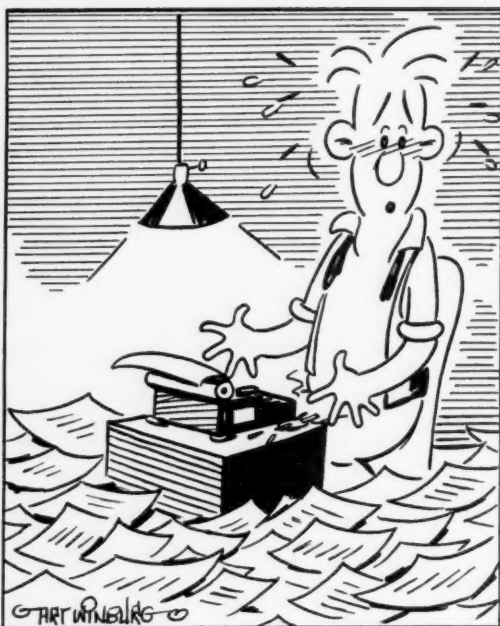
Here's where you come in. If you have more ideas on *what* to write and how to write it,

you've got a head start on the rest of the field, and a good chance of cracking into print. But don't, for crying out loud, do what nine out of ten would-be playwrights do: that is, sit down and write out a dozen pages of dialogue and hope to get it published.

Those of you wanting to take a jab at the amateur play market have to be told continually that you've got something different from a short-story when you're drawing up a play. A play is *not* a short story, and it primarily is *not* created to be read. It is written for acting purposes, on a stage, with live people performing in front of other live people. Theoretically, a play doesn't exist until it goes through its thirty minute to three hour traffic on the stage. And you can't follow short-story rules in writing a play or you're licked from the start. Consequently, one rather discouraging—but at the same time vitally important—item before you start to stare at a blank sheet on the typewriter is to go out and get some actual stage experience first. This is one precept, older than ancient history, which rarely can be violated successfully. It doesn't make any difference where you get that experience—the parish house of the First Methodist Church is just as good training as the Metropolitan Opera House if you apply yourself diligently, and get a clue as to how all those ropes and flats work backstage. And it won't hurt you to take the part of "confused noise without" in the missionary society's annual benefit performance, either. A knowledge of how the actors move around on a 2x4 stage without bumping into each other is almost indispensable.

●

If you're not too discouraged now, we'll move on to another important point: the type of play which sells best. Publishers of plays for amateurs don't give a hoot about a Pulitzer prize play if it won't sell in their market. They want plays which will warrant their putting out cold cash in order that they can later realize a profit. And they're not going to tie up capital just because a play is good. Who puts on most of the amateur productions? That's a hard question to answer, and there are no definite statistics on it, but we know this much: everybody has within him or herself a desire



"Golly!! I forgot to number my pages!"

to act, whether banker, butcher, or housewife. However, the ones who let that desire express itself more freely are women. So mark this down in your notebook: Plays for all-women casts are in demand constantly.

Don't get the mistaken idea that you can dash off a play of this type, and expect to sell it right off the bat. Sometimes publishers get overloaded with them, and sometimes authors send in all-women plays without observing all the necessary requisites of a good play. We'll mention a few of these requisites later.

Also mark this down: Sophisticated plays and pseudo-sophisticated plays have a very narrow market in the amateur field, and you'll do better if you aim your play at the middle-class groups in small towns. This is not an iron-clad rule, but merely will increase your chances. Make your play of interest to community life, yet steer away from too much of the "gossipy" type. This is getting a little worn.

Also remember that three-act plays are becoming a better investment for the publisher than one-acts—although the one-act still sells. Religious plays have a steady, even market, and are worth taking a shot at. Remember, though, that just because the play is religious, you do not have the license to violate the laws of play-writing. Make it alive, dramatic, and give it the same construction as any other good play. Too many religious scripts come in without any action or suspense, with large quotations from the Bible. Watch out for that tendency. Mystery plays, oddly enough, have a rather

poor sales volume, so steer away from them. Plays for children have only a fair market and are slow sellers, but plays for the upper teens, mixed cast, are a good bet.

The amateur drama field is rife with taboos, primary among them being the sex angle. Avoid it one hundred per cent. Keep all your plays clean and aboveboard. That's essential. Liquor is for the most part taboo, and you can get along better without it. Since a great many of the publishers put out temperance plays, they must tread warily where alcohol is concerned. Unhappy endings are out, except for tragedies, which are almost unsalable. Under no circumstances should a one-act play have more than one setting, and this is almost fully true about three-acters. Amateurs don't have the money or the time to fuss around with complicated stage sets. The simpler, the better. Nearly all the recent three-act amateur plays published have only one setting.

We don't have the space here to go into play-writing technique, but there is plenty of good material published on it. The best recent book, Hamilton's "So You're Writing A Play." Written in a breezy, swift style, it is thoroughly sound, and whether you're a playwright or not, I'll guarantee you won't lay the book down until you've finished it. More technical and involved, but full of excellent material, are George Baker's "Dramatic Technique" and William Archer's "Play Making." Both of these books offer nearly all you need to know about the actual mechanics of play writing.

However, I can briefly mention a few points here which the editor will look for in every script. First of all, there must be a *good* plot. A large percentage of the scripts coming in drift around without any purpose, and get nowhere. Plotting is vitally important. If you can slip in an added twist on the end, so much the better. *Conflict* is of course another big item. Dive right into it at the start, so that we readers can get interested right off the bat. *Action* is more essential in amateur plays than in the professional type. Amateurs love it, dote on it. Give them plenty of action, and lay it on thick. It goes without saying that *suspense* must be held out all through the play. And as far as dialogue is concerned, the shorter and more clipped the speeches are, the better. Don't have your characters spiel off long, windy speeches—it slows down the whole play.

A word about the technical side of the script would go well here. Study technique carefully before attempting any kind of a play. Often, we see scripts with the dialogue embraced in quotes. This immediately brands the author as



an amateur, and his script is read perhaps a little more hastily. Draw up a scene plot by all means, and write out a brief story plot also. Don't be afraid that this will make the editor lazy in reading through the script. Most play publishing houses will give the most horrible script a thorough reading. Play scripts are more ticklish to type than straight fiction ones, and a reasonable amount of neatness will help, but won't sell your play by itself. In my mind a very important detail is underlining all the action and descriptive phrases in red ink. This makes the action stand out from the dialogue and gives the reader a better chance to visualize the play in his mind. Unfortunately, only about three per cent of the authors do this.

If you'll follow these broad hints, you'll move up a peg in the play reader's estimation, but still don't be discouraged by a few rejections. When the publisher says your play "is not suited to our present editorial needs," he is not always kidding you. If an honest, objective criticism of your play convinces you that it's a fairly good bet for the amateur market, send it around to all of the houses in that field.

Below is a list of some of the companies, outstanding in the publishing of amateur plays:

*Denison Publishing Co.*, 203 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

*Walter H. Baker*, 178 Tremont St., Boston, Mass.

*Dramatic Publishing Co.*, 59 E. Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

*Eldridge Entertainment House*, Franklin, Ohio.

*Willis N. Bugbee Company*, 428 S. Warren St., Syracuse, N. Y.

*Penn Publishing Co.*, 925 Filbert St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

*Fitzgerald Publishing Corp.*, 11 E. 38th St., New York.

*Longmans, Green & Co.*, 114 Fifth Ave., New York.

*Row, Peterson & Co.*, 1911 Ridge Ave., Evanston, Illinois.

*Northwestern Press*, 2200 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

*Samuel French*, 25 W. 45th St., New York. (Charges reading fee.)

*Banner Play Bureau*, 137 W. Fourth St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

*Ivan Bloom Hardin Co.*, 3806 Cottage Ave., Des Moines, Iowa.

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## SALE PRICE

By MAYE V. CROW

A butcher shop's a funny place  
To find an inspiration,  
But I saw something there today  
That surely beat the nation.

Farewell to all rejection slips,  
Come checks for sums immense—  
My Butcher has a sign displayed  
"Brains on sale for thirty cents!"

## Answers to Quiz on Page 10

1. *It offers opportunities for the capable, hard worker.*

Professional writing is hard work, and no hard work is glamorous, after you've been at it long enough. It may be true that the writer is his own boss, in a sense of the word, but the idea that he is independent and footloose is the bunk. If you checked your need for money as a reason for wanting to write, you deserve credit only if you have good reason to feel that you have some knack for writing and enough gumption to make good at it. And self-expression has no more place in the thoughts of the average professional writer than it has in the thoughts of a dentist, or a street car conductor.

2. *My mental qualities and determination seem to fit me for it.*

The praise of your friends, who want to be pleasant to you and who probably have no editorial discrimination whatsoever, means nothing. Nor does your smug belief in the excellence of your own work. It is true that successful writers occasionally get enjoyment out of their writing, but the right turn of mind and plenty of intestinal fortitude is the *sine qua non*.

3. *A profession to be studied and learned.*

Some talent is necessary to make good in any profession, but the writer who depends just on his God-given genius usually winds up just where he started; i. e., nowhere.

4. *The kind of stories and articles he is trying to write.*

You can't learn to play jazz by studying Mozart and Brahms. Concentrate on the music you're trying to learn to play.

5. *False.* Good writing is usually the result of long thought and effort.

6. *False.* An attitude of contempt for what the magazines print won't get you anywhere. Before you call the work of any writer trashy, be sure you've proved your ability to do better.

7. *True.* Sympathetic criticisms are desirable, but the *best* criticisms are always straightforward and honest. The dependable critic never hesitates to disapprove a manuscript if it is no good.

8. *False.* A good many writers may be temperamental, but this is usually a handicap, rather than an asset. There is no profession that needs more nervous stability than writing.

9. *False.* We all have special aptitudes. Not everybody can learn to be a successful doctor or a lawyer. The writer needs some natural ability, just as does the follower of any other profession.

10. *False.* Just because you've seen the world, you are not necessarily a qualified writer. There is grist for the writer's mill in the experience of anybody.

# EDUCATIONAL MAGAZINES— THEIR REQUIREMENTS

... Compiled By ELOISE SAVITS

**T**HE educational article is finished. Where should it be sent? Who will publish it? How much will the publisher pay for it?

The following list will save you time and postage. It is based upon a recent survey made by a member of the magazine writing class in the School of Journalism of the State University of Iowa.

The replies to the questionnaire indicate that only a small proportion of magazines in this field are able to pay for free-lance material; a considerable number are unable to consider material, and others, while they will accept manuscripts from free-lancers, are unable to make payment. The following classification is made on the basis of these limitations.

## Able to Use and Pay for Material

**American Childhood** (Milton Bradley Co.), 74 Park St., Springfield, Mass. Very glad to consider any stories, articles, activities or poems. Prefers that these have for their themes Safety, Health or Citizenship. Has a surplus of nature and animal stories and poems at present. Interested in dramatizations suitable for children of first to third grades. Articles average about 1000 words in length and rates average \$5 for that number of words, with a maximum of \$6.50 a page of 1400 words. Payment on publication.

**Catholic School Journal, The** (Bruce Publishing Co.), Milwaukee, Wis. Most articles come from readers of the magazine who are active teachers in parochial schools or leaders in Catholic education. For articles not of conventional type \$5 per page is paid sometime after publication.

**Grade Teacher, The**, Leroy Ave., Darien, Conn. Prefers articles of 1100 or 1200 words, exclusive of photographs, unless the article be a very special type. Pays  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent per word after publication.

**Industrial Arts and Vocational Education**, 407 E. Michigan St., Milwaukee, Wis. Uses vocational articles, but is overstocked. Pays  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent a word on publication.

**Instructor, The**, Normal Park, Dansville, N. Y. Prefers articles from experienced teachers. However, it does buy stories, verse, and plays from free-lance writers. No quotation of price for manuscripts is made until the material has been examined. Payment on acceptance.

**Progressive Teacher, The**, Morristown, Tenn. Uses material useful to teachers and other educators in their work; length 850 to 1600 words. Sometimes arrangements are made for longer articles to be run serially. Regular rate is \$1.50 per page upon publication.

**School Activities**, 1515 Lane St., Topeka, Kans. Ordinarily no payment is made for feature articles, although a price of from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent per word is paid on publication for stunts and material of that kind.

**School Arts**, 1811 Printers Bldg., Worcester, Mass. Preferred contributions are those which carry a great many illustrations, text to run from 500 words to 2000. Payment is made after publication according to the content of the article, illustrations, and value to the readers.

## Use Practically No Free-Lance Material

**American School Board Journal, The** (Bruce Publishing Co.), 524-544 Milwaukee St., Milwaukee, Wis. Materials come from men and women actively and professionally engaged in school administration.

**Catholic Educational Review, The**, 1326 Quincy St. N. E., Washington, D. C. Has a number of unpublished manuscripts.

**Classical Journal, The**, 215 Brookings Hall, Washington University, St. Louis, Mo. Two years behind schedule in printing articles already accepted for publication.

**Educational Administration and Supervision** (Warwick and York, Inc.), Baltimore, Md. Contributions are written by specialists in their fields.

**English Journal, The**, 211 W. 68th St., Chicago, Ill. All articles are pedagogical except for one literary article usually done by people of national reputation for which pay is given.

**Journal of Geography**, 333 Elston Ave., Chicago, Ill. Authors and editorial staff contribute their time and efforts for the good of the cause.

**Industrial Educational Magazines** (Manual Arts Press), Peoria, Ill. Material written by men of considerable standing in the industrial field.

**Illinois Teacher**, 100 East Edwards, Springfield, Ill. Overstocked with material.

**Journal, The**, 33 Centennial Bldg., Tallahassee, Fla. Unable to find space for all material contributed by Florida teachers.

**Kansas Teacher**, Topeka, Kans. Interested only in material from educational leaders of Kansas.

**Massachusetts Teacher, The**, 15 Ashburton Pl., Boston, Mass. Feel that the magazine should be devoted to state matters and state writers.

**Michigan Education Journal**, Lansing, Mich. Contributions limited to Michigan authors.

**Minnesota Journal of Education**, 2642 University Ave., Saint Paul, Minn.

**Montana Education**, 403-5 Power Block, Helena, Mont. Impossible to use all the material contributed by own members.

**New Jersey Educational Review**, 605 Broad St., Newark, N. J.

**New York State Education**, 152 Washington Ave., Albany, N. Y.

**Oklahoma Teacher**, Third and Harvey, Oklahoma City. Interested only in material from teachers in state of Oklahoma.

**Oregon Educational Journal**, 602 Studio Bldg., Portland, Ore. Will use original projects and material from primary, vocational and music teachers of Oregon.

**Pennsylvania School Journal**, 400 N. Third St., Harrisburg, Pa. Have more material than can publish at the present time.

**School Life**, Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Little room left for contributed articles after the reports of research conducted by the staff members of the Office of Education are given place.

**S. D. E. A. Journal**, 218 S. Main Ave., Sioux Falls, S. Dak. Pressed for a space from own members.

**South Dakota Educational Association Journal**, 218 S. Main Ave., Sioux Falls, S. D.

**West Virginia School Journal**, Charleston, W. Va. Have more contributions than there is available space.

**Western Journal of Education**, 609 Mission St., San Francisco, Calif.

**Wisconsin Journal of Education**, 404 Insurance Bldg., Madison, Wis. Draws material almost exclusively from the members of the Association and from its editor.

## No Payment But Will Accept Material

**Childhood Education**, 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Usual length of published articles is 2500 words.

**Boston Teachers News Letter**, Teachers College, Boston, Mass. Preferred length of articles, 1000 to 1500 words.

**Connecticut Teacher**, State Office Bldg., Hartford, Conn. Always glad to consider contributions but space is limited.

**Educational Methods**, 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Most contributed articles are from those engaged in supervision. A great deal depends upon a background of experience.

**Educator**, The, 612 N. Park St., Columbus, Ohio. Good friends and those who wish to help the cause along are the usual contributors.

**Elementary School Journal**, 5835 Kimbark Ave., Chicago, Ill. Gives special emphasis to reports of scientific investigation conducted by specialists in the field of education.

**High School Journal**, The, Chapel Hill, N. C. Material from 1000 to 2000 words of professional interest to high school principals and teachers is the type needed.

**Indiana Teacher**, The, 203 Hotel Lincoln, Indianapolis, Ind. Accepts material from anyone who wishes to contribute.

**Journal of the N. E. A.**, The, 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Most articles have to do with the local, state and national problems of the N. E. A.

**Kentucky School Journal**, 1423 Heyburn Building, Louisville, Ky. Articles touching upon the business of teaching in all levels of service are published.

**Missouri School Journal**, The, 610 N. Kingshighway, St. Louis, Mo. A large part of the published material is requested.

**Nebraska Educational Journal**, 605 14th St., Lincoln, Neb. Uses articles of about 1000 to 1200 words, largely contributed by members of the association.

**Ohio Education Association**, 21 East State St., Columbus, Ohio. All manuscripts are submitted and accepted without any prospect of financial remuneration.

**Peabody Journal of Education**, Nashville, Tenn. Eager consideration is given to any submitted material which will be of profit to teachers.

**Pennsylvania Vocational Education News**, Penn. State College, State College, Pa. Glad to consider any material in the vocational field.

**San Francisco Teacher Bulletin**, 465 Post St., San Francisco, Calif. Short articles of about 200 words of the right type of material can be used.

**Scholastic**, 250 E. 43rd St., New York, N. Y. There is a complete embargo against original short stories and poems by adult writers.

**Scholastic Editor**, 333 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. Articles run around 1100 to 1400 words in length and illustrative material is always welcomed.

**Sierra Educational News**, 155 Sansome St., San Francisco, Calif. Material useful in the school-room.

**Social Studies**, The, 1021 Filbert St., Philadelphia, Pa. Interested in articles on the teaching of history and other social studies in the secondary schools.

**South Carolina Education**, Greenville, S. C. Glad to receive any free-lance material with the understanding that it may be rejected or accepted.

**Tennessee Teacher**, The, 601 Cotton States Bldg., Nashville, Tenn.

**Texas Outlook**, The, 410 E. Weatherford St., Fort Worth, Tex. Overstocked at present. Prefers articles of 1500 to 2000 words. Much interested in teacher retirement and teacher tenure, as well as in equalization of educational opportunities.

**Utah Educational Review**, 316 Beneficial Life Bldg., Salt Lake City, Utah. Manuscripts dealing with the promotion of educational activities and related subjects preferred. Ordinary articles should not be longer than 2000 words.

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Writes Ed Bodin, New York author's agent: "English agents report that because the big American pulp houses are shipping extra magazines to England and selling them in department stores for 3-pence, the English pulp markets are practically 'licked,' especially on Western, detective, and adventure stories. Practically no pulp sales are being made in England any more, except in the love-story field. According to one English agent, it is foolish for any American pulp writer to send short-stories to England. The only chance is for novels or half novels."

## ORIGINAL SCREEN STORIES

are in great demand, with film production again in top brackets. Only through an accredited agent can yours be given its chance in Hollywood.

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# LITERARY MARKET TIPS

The Ziff-Davis Publishing Co., 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, writes: "We are in the market for love novels of 60,000-word length. We would like to have stories of the Cinderella type, preferably with the locale in the United States. However, the main requisite is a first-class yarn. The action should be that which will appeal to both male and female readers. We want stories strong in characterization, plot, and significance; stories of the Edna Ferber type. We are wide open right now and are in a hurry to see material." The note is signed by Jerry K. Westerfeld, assistant editor. The Ziff-Davis Publishing Company pays 1 cent a word and up for fiction.

*The Catholic Woman's World*, Monroe, Mich., is a new monthly magazine edited by Florence E. Cox. T. H. Flood, director, creative division, writes: "It is our purpose to provide the best possible type of literature of all kinds, irrespective of whether the author is a Catholic or not. However, we must of necessity establish a policy that all material must not be in any way offensive or contrary to Catholic teachings and doctrines. However, this does not mean that it should be of the usual pietistic type. In fact, we will not accept such material. Fiction, for example, must have a high degree of entertainment value and still be kept on a plane that will make it acceptable to any right-thinking individual. We will use domestic feature articles, from 1500 to 3000 words in length; short-stories of travel, adventure, romance, 2000 to 3000 words, novelettes of 5000 to 10,000 words, and serials of 20,000 to 40,000 words. Payment is on publication at from 1½ to 3 cents a word."

*The National Tatler*, 73 Adelaide St., W., Toronto, Ont., Canada, announces the appointment of Al Palmer as managing editor, succeeding Richard A. Sair. Mr. Palmer writes: "Upon my inception of this post I discovered numerous letters from authors who are complaining that their manuscripts have not been returned or accepted. I have looked into this matter fully and was advised that Mr. Sair has several manuscripts in his possession. I have taken steps to secure them and will do my utmost to placate the authors who have righteously complained. In the future all manuscripts received by this desk will receive the utmost care." The requirements of the magazine are for short theatrical articles, inside exposés of rackets, articles on love, etc., about 600 words in length, and theatrical, crime, and love news items up to 300 words. Theatrical and girl photos are used. Payment is announced on publication at ½ cent a word.

*Athlete*, 79 7th Ave., New York, is a new Street & Smith monthly devoted to sport articles and fiction. It is edited both for fans and athletes.

*Railroad Magazine*, 280 Broadway, New York, announces that Henry B. Comstock has succeeded Gilbert H. Burck as associate editor.

Dell Publishing Company, 149 Madison Ave., New York, announces that it has discontinued the magazines *Mr., Mrs., Ballyhoo*, and *Man About Town*.

*The Christian Advocate*, 740 Rush St., Chicago, Ill., is now edited by T. Otto Nall. The former editor, Dan Brummitt, passed away in April.

The American Baptist Publication Society, 1701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, announces the following changes: *Adult Leader*, *Young People's Leader*, and *Children's Leader* have been merged in one 64-page magazine, *Baptist Leader*. This magazine offers only a specialized market and can scarcely use unsolicited manuscripts, the editors state. The story papers, *Girl's World* and *Boy's World*, have been merged in one paper, *Teens*. *Junior World* has been changed to *Juniors*. L. R. Jenkins, editorial counselor, writes: "When submitting stories or articles it is important that the writers address manuscripts to the periodicals for which they were written. Free-lance writers who do not know the character of our publications stand little or no chance of offering us available material. Send for sample copies and study them carefully before submitting." Following are detailed requirements for the various weekly story papers now issued by this company (all of which pay rates of \$4.50 per thousand words, on acceptance):

*Young People*, for young men and women over 17. "Stories should be from 1500 to 3000 words (2000-2500 preferred) with characters in their upper teens or twenties. Serials from four to ten chapters, 2500 words per chapter. We want clean, wholesome stories, preferably with religious or inspirational motivation, but not with the religious or moral emphasis hauled in. If you're not familiar with such material, don't try to write about it. Taboos are the obvious ones: murder, profanity, drinking, smoking, war (except as anti-war stories), etc. We do not want material written to formula; if you can turn out a smooth, fast-moving yarn with plenty of dialogue, while observing our other conditions, you will find a ready market here. Articles run 100 to 1500 words, preferably illustrated with photographs. We use inspirational, fact, hobby, and how-to-do articles, as well as news articles about what young people are doing. We use good photographs liberally, and some verse, of high literary standards."

*Teens*, for boys and girls of high school age. "Stories should be from 1500 to 3000 words (2000-2500 preferred) with boy and girl characters in the upper brackets of this age group. Serials from four to ten chapters, 2500 words per chapter." Requirements and lengths practically the same as for *Young People*, but addressed to this slightly younger age group.

*Juniors*, for boys and girls from nine to twelve years of age. "Stories from 900 to 2500 words in length, with boy and girl characters of junior age, a real plot of interest to children of this age, and written from a Christian point of view. Serial stories of six to ten chapters, 2500 words or less per chapter, have the same requirements. The plot should grow out of child life with its good times and many activities. Plenty of action, mystery, and suspense necessary, but the story must be essentially true to life. Animal stories are used occasionally when they are true to animal nature and have a real plot. Educational articles up to 1000 words in length are needed, but they must be written in simple, non-technical language, preferably in story form. Articles or stories explaining how to make or to do



something of interest to juniors are accepted frequently. Poetry with a spirit and action of interest to juniors is welcome. Material which glorifies war or war heroes is not acceptable."

*Story World*, for children under nine years old. "Stories should be from 500 to 700 words in length, with boy and girl characters from five to eight years of age. They should be built out of child life situations involving conduct adjustments, playtimes, home duties, and experiences in the out-of-doors which are of interest to younger children. Animal stories are considered and occasionally a make-believe or legendary story. Simple story-articles of 400 or 500 words, describing something for children to make or to do, will be given careful attention. Short verses, either with a religious or with a fanciful turn are needed. Only material of high literary standard and educational purpose, with a Christian outlook, is considered."

*Collier's Weekly*, 250 Park Ave., New York, is now seeking stories of more substance than heretofore; slight, frothy stories are being rejected, according to reports from New York agents.

*The Avenger*, 79 7th Ave., New York, is a new Street & Smith magazine, with a lead novel written under contract about a detective character. John L. Nanovic is editor.

*Famous Fantastic Mysteries*, 280 Broadway, New York, has been launched by the Frank A. Munsey Co. as a bi-monthly magazine devoted to reprint science and fantastic fiction. Apparently no original stories will be considered.

Doubleday, Doran & Co., book publishers, 14 W. 49th St., New York, announce that Malcolm Johnson, executive vice president of the company, will assume the editorship which was vacated by the resignation of Harry E. Maule a month or so ago. Don Elder will be in charge of the D. D. Westerns and James W. Poling of the Crime Club books.

Adolph B. Suess writes that he is no longer managing editor of *The Catholic Girl*, published by the Buechler Publishing Co., of Belleville, Ill. He states that the company is rated as reliable and that he believes all writers will be paid for material accepted in the past but not paid for.

The Noram Publishing Co., Greenwich, Conn., which called for material of exposé nature for a forthcoming weekly newspaper, is reported "out of business" by the post office.

A reader reports that Voice Publications, 27 Beach St., Boston, sent out a circular in April appealing for manuscripts, but has made no report on a manuscript submitted in response to the request, and pays no attention to inquiries.

*National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Review* is the new title of the former *National Bowlers Journal and Recreation Age*, 506 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago. It is now interested only in bowling and billiards articles, including lawn bowling. Photos and cartoons are considered by H. G. Deupree, editor. Payment is at 1 cent a word, on publication.

*The Walther League Messenger*, 801 DeMun Ave., St. Louis, Mo., is an illustrated magazine using articles, editorials, and fiction. Requirements and rates paid for material are not at hand.

Ronald Oliphant has resigned from the Street & Smith organization, 79 7th Ave., New York, and Francis Stebbins, formerly assistant, is now editor of *Wild West Weekly*, succeeding him.

*Lyrical Poetry*, Box 608, Benito, Tex., is a verse magazine published by B. C. Hagglund and edited by Isabel Kellogg Hagglund. It seeks lyric verse of 24 lines or less. A distinct singing quality is required, and song poems are acceptable. No payment is offered.

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*Motorland*, 150 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, Calif., is a travel magazine for Western motor club members, edited by W. C. Kilcline. Articles of from 300 to 1000 words with a direct motoring appeal are used. Out-of-the-way places on the Coast that can be reached by motor, described in simple English and accompanied by photos, often find a welcome. Payment is on acceptance at varying rates, Photos \$2.

*National Motorist*, 216 Pine Street, San Francisco, Calif., a monthly edited by Gene Hogle, offers but a limited market since most of its material is assigned or staff written. Articles with a California setting with motoring background are considered and car maintenance hints, travel notes and the like are sometimes purchased. It is best to query, however. Rates start at 1/2 cent a word, with payment promptly on acceptance.

*News Letter and Wasp*, 524 Market Street, San Francisco, John LeBerthon, editor and publisher, is a weekly news publication which buys some free-lance column material and an occasional short-story of 1000 to 1500 words. Its features usually are of the financial-interest type, with illustrations furnished by the author. Rates vary according to the value of the manuscript, payment on publication. Column material must have a San Francisco slant.

*Ken*, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, is being discontinued by the Esquire-Coronet Company.

*Sweetheart Stories*, 149 Madison Ave., New York, of the Dell group, writes that at the moment it is looking for love stories written in the "slick-paper" vein.

*Discussion*, 51 E. 42nd St., New York, is a new magazine devoted to discussion of national and social issues. No payment is offered for contributions.

*Ski*, 370 Lexington Ave., New York, devoted to the sport of skiing, is announced, under the editorship of Colin F. Soule.

*Lure*, 149 Madison Ave., New York, is a new Dell quarterly, devoted to pointers on beauty for women.

Mail addressed to *The Home Friend Magazine*, 549 W. Randolph St., Chicago, is returned by order of the postmaster general, marked "Fraudulent."

*Pacific Motorist*, Pine Street, San Francisco, has been discontinued.

*Women's City Club Magazine*, 465 Post Street, San Francisco, Calif., ordinarily does not pay for material.

*Creative Writing*, 1360 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, while seeking short-stories, essays, plays, sketches, and poetry, is not able to pay for material at the present time, write Robert and Margaret Williams, editors.

## PRIZE CONTESTS

*The Atlantic Monthly*, in association with Little, Brown and Company, announces its Seventh Atlantic Novel Contest, in which \$10,000 is offered for the most absorbing unpublished novel submitted before April 1, 1940. One-half of the award represents an outright prize and the balance an advance on account of royalties. Only unpublished and unserialized works in English will be considered. Beyond this there are no restrictions whatever as to authorship or subject. The judges will be members of the editorial staff of the *Atlantic Monthly Press*. The winning novel will be announced within two months of the closing of the competition. Circulars giving full details may be obtained by addressing Seventh Atlantic Contest, *Atlantic Monthly Press*, 8 Arlington Street, Boston.

*Better Homes & Gardens*, Meredith Bldg., Des Moines, Ia., offers \$1 each for "Handy Ideas" accepted for the department, "Dad's Practical Pointers." No items returned.

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Adventure Magazine for July publishes a story with which I helped a client. The cost of my assistance on this manuscript, which was built up from a rough pencil sketch to an outstanding feature in its field, was \$4.00. As he sold direct, I received no commission.



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*Startling Stories*, 22 W. 48th St., New York, offers a first prize of \$25, second of \$15, and third of \$10 for best interpretations of the cover painting on its September issue. Readers of the magazine are asked to write a simple letter of not more than 1500 words telling just what kind of a science-fiction yarn the cover suggests. All entries must be mailed by midnight, Sept. 7, 1939. Address, Cover Contest Editor.

*The Colophon*, 229 W. 43d St., New York, is offering a \$50 prize to undergraduates in the United States and Canada, for the best essay about the student's own book collection. Essays must reach the editors not later than August 31.

*Popular Photography*, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, announces, in its August issue, prize contests totaling \$3000 open to amateur and professional photographers.

In a department captioned "The Catchpenny Column," *The Country Home Magazine*, 150 Park Ave., New York, states that it will pay \$1 each for accepted items. Items are short, never exceeding one paragraph. In another department, "The Farm Parade," the announcement is made: "The Farm Parade is always on the lookout for new recruits—readers who will send us humorous or informative items of national farm interest. For each such item accepted for publication we will pay \$5."

*Better Homes & Gardens*, Des Moines, Ia., offers \$1 each for acceptable garden tips through its department, "Along the Garden Path."

*The Country Home*, 250 Park Ave., New York, offers \$1 each for gardening tips. Address "The Garden Row" department.

*Better Homes & Gardens*, Des Moines, Ia., offers \$2 each for acceptable letters of not to exceed 200 words, about problems met and solved, for its "We Parents" department.

*The Country Home Magazine*, 250 Park Ave., New York, pays \$1 for each home improvement letter used. No letters returned.

*Modern Romances*, 149 Madison Ave., New York, offers prizes of \$15, \$10 and five of \$5 for most helpful letters of criticism of the magazine received each month.

*The American Weekly* offers \$5 each for outstanding original recipes accepted for and published in its page, "The Housewife's Food Almanac." Send to *The American Weekly Housewife's Food Almanac*, 255 E., 45th St., New York. Unused recipes will not be returned.

*Better Homes & Gardens*, 1714 Locust St., Des Moines, Iowa, is offering cash prizes for recipes, and favoring those used in the northwest, apparently.

## BUSINESS MAGAZINE DEPARTMENT

Edited by JOHN T. BARTLETT

*Syndicate Store Merchandiser*, 79 Madison Ave., New York, Joseph E. Martin, assistant editor, gives some information concerning prices paid for photographs. "We have," says Mr. Martin, "our standard rates with which we do business with correspondents which are based on a rate of from \$2 to \$3 per picture of regular size, glossy prints 7x10 commercial size. We have felt that for smaller type pictures a proportionately lower rate is in order because of the lesser degree of expense for films, printing and developing, plus shorter time required to set up photos." Thus, often only \$1 is paid for an amateur print.

*Service Station News*, San Francisco, Calif., has moved from 369 Sansome St. to 121 Second St. R. H. Argubright, editor, informs that he can use a few short stories on the general order of "How To Do It." These may be accompanied by candid-camera style of pictures whenever these are available. "This type of article, which is best when obtained by personal contact with service station operator, garageman and car dealer service man, may have to do with service short-cuts, merchandising ideas, management, or just plain personal slant. "But," insists Mr. Argubright, "such stories must be about the operator himself, preferably developed from a talk with him." Regular rate of payment is 1/2 cent a word.

*Beach and Pool*, 425 Fourth Ave., New York, desires no free-lance material. Karl K. Collins, editor, suggests that the listing of this publication be dropped, for he says, "I am not in the market for the usual run of free-lance material. Occasionally I do buy a piece, but it is so seldom, that it would not be fair to lead readers to think I am a prospect."

*Savings Bank Journal*, 110 E. 42nd St., New York, is now being edited by Harold M. Sherman. This publication uses financial, economic, industrial, business articles as these subjects are related to mutual savings bank interest. Payment is made upon publication at 1 cent a word or by arrangement with the author.

*White Collar*, 230 Fifth Ave., New York, is out of business.

*The American Lumberman*, 431 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, reports a large accumulation of material awaiting publication, plus steady production by its own staff. R. P. Phales, associate editor, handles manuscripts very promptly.

*United States Camera Magazine*, formerly at 381 Fourth Ave., is now at 122 E. 42nd St., New York.

*The Camera*, formerly at 636 S. Franklin Squ., is now located at 153 N. 7th St., Philadelphia.



*Building Supply News*, 59 E. Van Buren Ave., Chicago, is launching a new editorial feature to start with the September, 1939, issue. This feature will comprise a good photograph of an outstanding window display, a rough map showing the overall dimensions of the window display arrangement; on this map the exact location of each item in the display arrangement; a description of the nature of type of fixtures or special furniture needed and how to make it if possible; a complete list of the items displayed, including the manufacturer's name and brand, size, weights, grades, and other important identifying features. All acceptable material will be paid for upon publication, at not less than \$10 per window display.

Miller Freeman Publications, 121 Second St., San Francisco (formerly at 369 Pine St.) include *Western Baker*, *Western Canner and Packer*, *Pacific Chemical and Metallurgical Industrial*, and *Pacific Laundry and Cleaning Journal*. As these publications are, for the most part, technical, it is advisable to query the publisher-editor, William B. Freeman, before submitting material. Payment is 1 cent a word on publication, \$2 for photos.

*Western Tobacconist*, 509 Sansome St., San Francisco, Leo Kemper, editor, goes to retail tobacconists, and uses feature material telling the retailer how he can build up his business, lower expenses, effect a saving, and make a success. Lengths run up to 1500, but the shorter lengths find readier acceptance. Payment is from 1/2 cent up, on publication.

*Keeler's Pacific Hotel Review*, Pacific Bldg., San Francisco, and *Western Hotel Reporter*, 26 O'Farrell St., of the same city, use very little freelance material, being largely staff-written. However, they are reliable concerns of many years standing, and, if you have something special in their line, it might pay to query the editors, Irvin C. Keeler and F. P. Barish, respectively.

*Beer Distributor*, 43 East Ohio St., Chicago, is interested in any type of story from all parts of the country except west of the Rockies, having to do with successful methods of wholesalers of beer (not the brewers). Rates vary from \$10 to \$20 per article depending upon length and importance of treatment. Approved length is 500 to 1000 words, with illustrations. R. H. Hopkins handles manuscripts.

*Architect and Engineer*, 68 Post St., San Francisco, is a monthly using illustrated articles of interest to the architect and engineer. Modern housing units with floor plans, new layout methods and cost-estimate systems make good reading, if they are well written and well illustrated. Payment is made on publication at \$5 up for photos, 1 cent a word up, for text. F. W. Jones is editor.

*Pacific Coast Journal of Nursing*, 609 Sutter St., San Francisco, is a publication of the California State Nurses Association, edited by Harriott Friend, with Jane Temple managing editor. Articles, which run from 500 to 1200 words, should be of interest to public and private nurses. Rates are low, payable on publication, and it is best to query.

*Pacific Road Builder and Engineering Review*, 639 New Call Bldg., San Francisco, W. L. Netherby, editor, wants feature material accompanied by photos, of interest to road and engineering contractors and engineers. Articles must be informative and interesting, with subject matter limited to the Western states.

*Motor Freightier*, 1014 Lloyd St., Seattle, Wash., has gone out of business.

*Highway News*, Ft. Shelby Hotel, Detroit, is not in the market at present, according to J. L. Edman, editor.

*Business Promotion*, 9 S. Clinton St., Chicago, published by Henry Bunting, is wholly staff-edited.

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Jane Hardy was formerly on the editorial staff of Macmillan Company. She is highly recommended by Harold S. Latham, Ida Tarbell, Henry Goddard Leach, Hamlin Garland, and others.

Send for circular, and for letters of recommendation from George Horace Lorimer, H. L. Mencken, John Farrar, William C. Lengel, H. E. Maule, William Allen White, Marie M. Meloney, H. C. Paxton, Fulton Oursler, Thayer Hobson, Marjory Stoneman Douglas and others.

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This series began in the September, 1938, issue. Back copies available.

## XI—METHODS OF HANDLING RETROSPECT

There are, broadly speaking, three methods of handling retrospect, and their use falls into two categories:

1. *Retrospect as a necessary evil.*
2. *Retrospect as a way of telling the story.*

The first will be found chiefly in yarns of the objective type—tales of adventure, love, mystery, achievement—stories in which characters *do* things.

The second is more frequently encountered in stories of literary pretension—introspective stories, sophisticated stories, those in which the characters undergo spiritual awakenings or reach significant decisions. We find it also in short short-stories, where the need for compression necessitates its use.

The first usage recognizes that a reader's interest will be held only as long as things keep happening. There must be no dull passages of explanation. And yet, in order to make the incidents understandable and convincing, it is necessary to give their background—which means telling what happened before.

The story, for example, may open with a gun-fight between two desperate men in a lonely canyon. No matter how thrilling the fight may be, there will come a time when it palls upon even the most gory-minded reader, unless he understands what it is all about. This means that the author must pause to tell why the two men are fighting.

### First Method—Straight Narration

The simplest method of giving the reader this information is to sandwich a resumé of the circumstances between fragments of direct action. To illustrate:

*The Briscoe Kid drew a careful bead on the point where the other man's gun had appeared. He watched unblinkingly for its reappearance. When that gun was thrust forth again, he would be ready.*

*This was the opportunity he had been waiting for—waiting for five long years. When he learned on good authority that Red Saunders was the man who betrayed him to the sheriff, he had sworn to get even, even if it took him a lifetime. They had been members of the same semi-outlaw band, sworn to mete out justice on the cattle range in a situation which the law could not, or at least would not, touch. Some one had betrayed their plans—and the Kid had plenty of reason to be sure that the traitor was Red Saunders. The Kid had paid the penalty—five long years behind the bars. Now he had come back to claim his revenge.*

*There was a movement among the rocks. The Briscoe Kid tensed his finger on the trigger.*

Such a passage as this does not pretend to be anything other than retrospect. The author delays the direct action long enough to tell who the characters are and what led up to the incident in which they are involved. Further details may be interpolated later, as opportunity permits.

Readers ordinarily will stand for a few such passages. Nevertheless, they prefer direct action, and if

the retrospect can be disguised as such, so much the better.

### Second method—Dialogue References.

A familiar method of disguising retrospect is to weave it into dialogue. The dialogue takes place in the present—it is part of the vivid scene which is being portrayed before the reader's eyes. Yet incidentally it acquaints the reader with what took place in the past. Thus:

"So you think I'm bluffing!" roared Pemberton, towering over his smaller opponent as a mastiff might tower over a terrier. "You thought I was bluffing when I sent word that I'd run you out of town if you ever came back to Midvale?"

Lafe Peters did not appear disturbed. "Sure, you're bluffing. You never done anything but bluff. Even back when we was kids together, you was always trying to bluff and bully your way through school. Everybody was on to you."

"Meaning who?" sneered Pemberton.

"Meaning Emmy, for one, if you want to know."

"Then all I got to say is it was a bluff that worked. You'd have given your eye teeth to get her for yourself, but it was me she married. Seems like that's making good on a bluff."

"Nope," retorted Lafe Peters imperturbably, "it ain't. Because she found you out for what you was, and left you. She's calling your bluff now, with these divorce proceedings, and I'm her attorney."

Ostensibly, this dialogue is an irate discussion between two men—it is a form of drama taking place in the present. Actually, its purpose is to tell the reader what happened in the past. It conveys the information that Pemberton and Lafe were boys in school together; that they both wanted the same girl; that Pemberton somehow managed to win the girl; that she left him, and is now suing for divorce.

This method of unfolding the retrospect is well adapted for stories of the objective type. Care, however, must be taken not to overload the dialogue with references to the past. The device loses its effectiveness the moment it becomes apparent. References to what has gone before must never be "dragged in." If they do not occur naturally in the dialogue, it is better to divulge the information in the form of straight retrospect than to risk making the incident seem forced or unnatural.

### Third Method—Memory Scanning.

The third method of revealing past information is especially adapted to our category of "retrospect as a way of telling the story," though its use is by no means limited to this. Brief examples frequently occur in stories of objective type.

In this method, the character *remembers* events of the past. The retrospect is slightly disguised by an atmosphere of present action, for while the remembered events occurred in the past, the character is thinking of them in the present. Moreover, the transition is rendered easy and natural because the inci-

dents can be tied up in some way with events or objects of the present. Thus:

*As the door slammed after Jim's retreating figure, Marcia sank to the floor, burying her face in her hands. How could their marriage have thus gone to pieces in one short year? She found herself searching the past, seeking to find in it some definite thing that had started the rift which now threatened to part them irrevocably. Was it the night when she had pretended to be jealous because Jim walked home with Ida McCall? He ought to have known she wasn't really serious in accusing him of an affair with the blonde busy—at first, anyway. Of course, when he flew off the handle—Well, they had said things to each other that night that left scars. Then there was the time when— etc.*

Another example:

*When Nora had left the office, David did not at once return to his interrupted task. For a few moments he sat staring into space.*

*"Alluring as ever," he mused, "and as heartless."*

*He turned to his desk. Slowly he unlocked a drawer, containing a few worn souvenirs.*

*A dance program there was, with a faded fraternity design on the cover. That brought to mind the evening when he had found Jack Webster's name on the line of the program which he had previously pre-empted. The erasing and substitution had been so carelessly done that it was in itself an insult—in spite of Nora's artistically feigned regret. She had even had the audacity to reproach him because he did not claim the rest of his dances.*

*Well, David had been a fool, and that misunderstanding was patched up. He pushed the program aside. Underneath was a thin packet of letters, and finally another note, its phrases so carefully designed to wound that even now he winced and instinctively covered it without reading. That was the letter in which she informed him that when the day planned for their wedding arrived, she would be on her way to Europe with Jack Webster.*

The great advantage of memory retrospect is its elasticity. In the above examples, the action is kept vividly before the reader by mingling references to the past with incidents and objects of the present. Yet memory retrospect also serves as a means for gliding from the present to the past so imperceptibly and naturally that the past events may be portrayed in dramatic detail, without apparent interruption of the continuity.

The "stream-of-consciousness" type of story lends itself particularly to this form of retrospect, for usually it is a blend of direct action and memories. The memories are practically as vivid as the direct action, since both are viewed through the lense of the character's thoughts. The emphasis is not on what the characters do, but on what they *think*. The following example shows the manner in which this facilitates easy transitions from present to past and vice versa.

*As he looked at Mary, he could not help thinking what a cute effect was created by the little procession of freckles across her nose, and what a grand pal she was. He remembered the first time he had met her. It was the day of the boat races. That was also the day when he had broken with Enid. What a stupid thing it had been to blame Enid merely because he was not the only male who found her attractive.*

*He shivered inwardly at the cold scorn that had been in her voice as she told him: "For the last time, Vic, I am not going to govern my life by what you think I should or should not do."*

*And his hot retort: "Perhaps you'd like to break our engagement."*

*"I'm glad you saved me the trouble of bringing up the subject," was her deliberate response.*

*He couldn't imagine such a scene taking place with Mary. Looking at her now, he wondered why it was that he must always be thinking of the absent Enid, instead of the present and undeniably vivid Mary.*

Stream-of-consciousness narration, involving a considerable portion of memory retrospect, as a general rule requires more skill and experience on the part of the author than objective narration. The two objective types of retrospect—straight narration and dialogue—usually are found in pulp and juvenile fiction, while memory scanning predominates in "slick-paper," sophisticated, and literary periodicals.

All three types of retrospect not infrequently are employed together, even though one type may predominate. The following passage illustrates such a mingling of the three:

*When the gong sounded for the next round, Matt came out of his corner laughing. He was thinking of the surprise he would spring on Sallie with the loser's share of the purse. He would take her out and buy her a big dinner at Shanley's. She'd be hopping mad, of course, when she found he had broken his promise, but he knew how to take care of that.*

*There had been a time when Sallie had sat in a front row whenever Matt fought. She had shouted and cheered him on with the maddest of the spectators. But that was before he began to lose the sight of one eye, and before he had those spells when he didn't quite know what was going on. "I'm not going to be married to no punch-drunk has-been!" Sallie had stormed, her blunt words belying the affectionate anxiety she really felt. "You gotta cut it out. I'd rather starve than see you take another beatin'."*

*Matt laughed again. Yes, he could take care of her when she jumped him for breaking his promise. "How about you, Sal?" he would come back at her. "Maybe you think I ain't wise that you've gone back to fillin' in at the rush hour down at Murphy's Cafe—you with your lame back—after promisin' me and the Doc you'd quit waitin' table for good."*

*Dynamite Joe didn't know why Matt laughed when he came out of his corner. His beetling brows gathered in a frown. "You laugh now!" he snarled. "You laugh on other side of you face when I knock you into them hospital, same like I did two year ago."*

## PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. Underline the phrases involving the three types of retrospect contained in the last above example. Indicate them by different colors of pencil—as, black for straight retrospect, red for dialogue retrospect, blue for memory retrospect.

2. Similarly, underline the passages and phrases of retrospect in a number of stories selected from all types of magazines. Study the results. Which type of retrospect do you find predominating in stories of literary type? In juveniles? In pulps? In "slick-paper" yarns? In short shorts? In which stories would you say that retrospect is employed as a necessary evil, and in which as a way of telling the story?

3. Try to locate a published story which is told almost entirely through retrospect. Which form of retrospect is predominantly employed in telling it?

4. Take passages involving one kind of retrospect and convert them into other types.

5. Take a story (your own or some other) and, opening it with one of the concluding incidents, try to tell it naturally through stream-of-consciousness memory retrospect.

6. Practice writing passages of retrospect with many examples of your own devising, using whatever methods seem most natural. Seek through practice to cultivate perfect ease in your transitions from present to past narration and back again.

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